CONSUMER TIME

THE STORY OF WATER

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And here are your inquiring consumers, Johnny and Mrs. Freyman.

5. JOHN: Water...let's see...dew, dams, evaporation...feed water, floods, fog, frost...geysers, glaciers, hail....

6. FREYMAN: Hail yourself, Johnny. And what do you think you're doing?

7. JOHN: (INTERRUPTS) Sh, Mrs. Freyman! Hail, hydraulic engineering, hydro-therapy...ice...lakes...mineral water, moisture....

8. FREYMAN: Whatever is going on!

9. JOHN: Precipitation...oceans...rivers...sea-water, snow, soil erosion...oh, and springs, steam...waterfalls, wells....

10. FREYMAN: Now just one minute, Johnny. What is that long list of nonsense you're reeling off?

11. JOHN: Okay, Mrs. Freyman, I'm through now.

12. FREYMAN: Through with what?

13. JOHN: Checking over my notes, so I'll be prepared. Don't you remember? We're promised that today we'll tell the story of water.

14. FREYMAN: Well, do all those subjects come under the heading of water?

15. JOHN: They sure do. And every one is important to you as a consumer.

16. FREYMAN: All of them?

17. JOHN: Sure...just think. We drink water...bathe in it. We travel on water...and we generate power with it. We use it in science, art, industry, and commerce. And yet we take water for granted.

18. FREYMAN: How do you mean, Johnny?

19. JOHN: Water is more vital than most of us realize. Water means life itself and water means our way of life.

20. MUSIC: THEME

21. JOHN: So where should we begin the story of water, Mrs. Freyman?

22. FREYMAN: Why not begin it with the water that comes out of the faucet in my kitchen sink, Johnny?

23. JOHN: Oh, but that's an open chapter in the water story. We all know how important running water is in our houses. Let's start with water and the land...water and soil... because if we don't have a productive soil, what have we got?

24. MUSIC: CHORD

25. JOHN: If we don't have good usuable land...it's easier to answer the question of what we don't have than what we do have. Without land...we can't have plants...and plants mean food...food for people and livestock.

26. JED: Now I'm a farmer and I know that's right. You've heard of the Dust Bowl...the land around the point where the Texas panhandle touches four other States...that stretch of American countryside that was once dehydrated...that thirsty belt of land where the dust stayed in your eyes and ears and mouth from sun up to sun down. That's where my land is. Dry...why in the old days, I dug me a well, and the climate was so dry that the water had only a thirty-five percent moisture content. (CHUCKLES) Y'might think I shouldn't be joking about such a serious matter. But things aren't like they used to be out in the old Dust Bowl...not by a long shot. It all started (FADE) one night....

28. SOUND: DOOR OPENING...WIND HOWLING...UNTIL DOOR SLAMS SHUT

29. MARY: Jed! My, you let a lot of dust in with you.

30. FARMER: Really blowing up now. Glad the meeting broke up so's I could get back from town before that dust really gets bad. Would never have made it later with the car.

31. MARY: Well what happened at the meeting, Jed?

32. JED: There was some good talk, Mary...and it changed my mind about a lot of things.

33. MARY: What things?

34. JED: There's going to be no more talk about us leaving this here farm.

35. MARY: Jed!

36. JED: We're staying right here and make a go of this place.

37. MARY: But Jed...we already made our minds up on that. This isn't a farm any more. It's only a pile of dust. No, Jed, we're packing up and moving on someplace else.

38. JED: And I say no, Mary...we're staying right here. The government people who studied conditions out here are going to help us make better use of the land. And I'm going to take their advice.

39. MARY: Well, what did they say? Do we have to quit growing wheat?

40. JED: Yes and no....We've been putting all of our land in wheat for too long. And with no rain...the soil crumbled and just blows away...we haven't got enough good top soil left. We're going to do just what the man said.

41. MARY: Well...what did he say, Jed?

42. JED: Well as a matter of fact I was so impressed, I wrote it down... (READS) "Treat each acre according to its needs, and use each acre according to its capabilities."

43. MUSIC: BRIDGE

44. JOHN: To treat each acre according to its needs means that farmers in this area must conserve every bit of water that falls....Because every acre in the Dust Bowl needs water.

45. FREYMAN: Well, how do they do that, Johnny?

46. JOHN: By building terraces or dams to catch and hold the water when it rains....Then they can use that water for irrigation. Another way is to give a field a rest for a year.

47. FREYMAN: What does that do?

48. JOHN: It helps build up the moisture content of the soil. And there are certain ways to plow which help hold the water.

49. FREYMAN: That makes sense to me.

50. JOHN: Yes, Mrs. Freyman, conservation farming in the Dust Bowl made sense...just as it made sense to dam the great rivers of the West and let them trickle slowly out to irrigate the parched deserts and other dry areas...to grow food for America and the world.

51. FREYMAN: And it's beginning to make sense to me, why I as a consumer should be interested in water on the farm.

52. JOHN: But you haven't heard everything yet about the importance of water in the West. Farther West, the rancher has to make sure there's enough water for his livestock.

53. SOUND: CATTLE IN THE BACKGROUND....REPEAT OCCASIONALLY DURING SCENE

54. JED: (DISCOURAGED) Durndest bunch of cattle I ever did see. Mournful-looking critters. Look as if their skin was just draped over their skeletons...and not one ounce of flesh in between. Got to get some water for those cattle and got to get it quick.

55. SOUND: UP AND OUT.

56. JOHN: Yes...water is the lifestream of farm production. More water means more grass on the land so livestock put on weight faster. More water means cows give more milk.

57. FREYMAN: More water means that gardens grow more vegetables.

58. JOHN: Hens lay more eggs...poultry grow larger. And you know, Mrs. Freyman, when a horse or a steer takes a drink of water, he's not dainty about it.

59. FREYMAN: You mean he doesn't crook his little hoof as he drinks?

60. JOHN: I mean a horse or a fat steer needs about ten gallons of water a day...and a cow needs about twenty-five gallons.

61. FREYMAN: Well that sounds reasonable. I read once that milk is over eighty percent water.

62. JOHN: Now, I'm not through with my water statistics. A pig needs one hundred sixty gallons of water to round out his weight. And one hundred chickens need over five gallons of water a day.

63. FREYMAN: Well...how can a farmer get more water for his livestock?

64. JOHN: There are ponds...and springs...and wells, if the farmers don't have any other water supply. And don't kid yourself that a farmer's new well isn't important to each and every consumer in some far off city.

65. FREYMAN: Well, I'm not so sure I see the connection.

66. JOHN: You like meat, don't you, Mrs. Freyman?

67. FREYMAN: Of course I do.

68. JOHN: And you like good quality meat, don't you?

69. FREYMAN: Yes...and I think that qualifies me as an average consumer.

70. JOHN: All right Mrs. Average Consumer Freyman...listen to what one farmer in Montana had to say for the benefits of his new well....

71. JED: "I used to have an old shallow well that just about gave enough water for the family. But I had to drive the livestock half a mile to a watering pond...and during the winter I had to chop holes through the ice so they could get something to drink. Now I got me a new well...so the livestock don't have to go to the pond...and there's no more danger of them slipping on the ice. The well has just about paid for itself...'cause with more water I can raise more beef and better beef."

72. MUSIC: BRIDGE

73. JOHN: It doesn't take much imagination to see what more cattle on one man's farm means to town folks or other consumers, Mrs. Freyman.

74. FREYMAN: I guess you mean more meat, Johnny.

75. JOHN: Mm hmm...a larger quantity and a better quality. Just a new well made it possible for this one particular farmer to raise three times as much cattle and eighty more hogs ...and that's quite a lot more beef steaks and pork chops on the hoof.

76. FREYMAN: And that was only one farmer's experience, Johnny.

77. JOHN: Right...so when other farmers who need it get more water, we really see an increase in food production.

78. FREYMAN: And we'd not only get more meat...but think of all the other things...shoes...and other leather goods...and all the other products we get from animals.

79. JOHN: So I think we've proved another point...that enough water for livestock on the farm is important to the city folks. And we haven't even mentioned water in the farm house...the barns...and the chicken houses.

80. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny, I think it's obvious that water is important to farm homes.

81. JOHN: Guess it is. But what a lot of farm and city people don't realize is, how much time some farm folks spend hauling water. Yes...hauling water on the farm can be a great time and energy waster.

82. MUSIC: BRIDGE

83. JED: (WITH APPROPRIATE SOUNDS...WORKING AT THE PUMP) If there's anything that's more a waste of time, it's pumping this here pump.

84. MARY: Well you keep on pumping, just the same. And hurry up. I need this water for washing dishes. Okay...I'll take this up to the house now....Where you going, Jed?

85. JED: (PROJECT) Got some things to do in the barn....

86. MARY: (INTERRUPTS) Well you'd better haul up some more water to the house for me first. I've got to put the clothes to soak.

87. JED: Here I go again.

88. SOUND: PUMP

89. MARY: And Jed...after thatI'm going to give the kids their baths, so you'd better come back and get some more water.

90. FARMER: Say, Mary, why don't we buy our water from Sam...down the road? He's making a regular business these days of hauling water for other people.

91. MARY: Too expensive.

92. JED: Yes, but Mary, I could be putting in this time in the fields, and you could help me too, if you didn't have to haul the water to the house.

93. MARY: Too expensive.

94. FARMER: But Mary, I been thinking...if I spend an hour every work day carrying water up to the house...that means I lose five weeks a year. Now if w e bought our water from Sam....

95. MARY: If we did, I know just what would happen.

96. JED: What?

97. MARY: We'd try and economize on our water...drink less water... take fewer baths...and we just can't get along without enough water.

98. JED: Well, then, I wish we could afford to put in a pump near the house...or pipe the water into the house. Hauling this water takes too much time.

99. SOUND: PUMP....FADE INTO

100. MUSIC: BRIDGE

101. JOHN: Now that farmer had a typical water problem up to a while back, Mrs. Freyman.

102. FREYMAN: And I can see how it is a problem, Johnny. Plenty of water is so important for running a house.

103. JOHN: Yes, water, clean water and lots of it, is a good health insurance. But still some farmers have to haul water a long distance. I heard about one Texas farmer who hauled water more than a mile once a day for the past twenty years.

104. FREYMAN: Goodness, Johnny...how'd he manage to get anything else done?

105. JOHN: Well he didn't. Just when he'd get in the middle of a farm job, he'd have to hitch up the team and go after water. Milk production was always low because the cows didn't get enough to drink.

106. FREYMAN: I'll bet his wife never had enough water to use in the house either.

107. JOHN: She didn't. She had to skimp with the water for laundry and for family use. But you should see that farm after a pond was dug and water was piped to the kitchen and the garden and the stock pens.

108. FREYMAN: Water really makes the difference then?

109. JOHN: It certainly does on a farm. And good farmers know that water often means the difference between a good living and just "getting by".

110. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny, I can see how important water is on the farm....And I know it's important to me as a consumer... because water boosts food production...but I'm wondering....

111. JOHN: About what?

112. FREYMAN: About the farmer who can't afford to improve his water supply. Doesn't it cost money to dig ponds...and install pipes...and all that?

113. JOHN: Sure it does...but the farmer can get help with that problem.

114. FREYMAN: He can? Where?

115. JOHN: From Uncle Sam....

116. FREYMAN: The Government?

117. JOHN: That's right...and more specifically the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Yes, Congress thinks adequate water on every farm in the United States is so important...that several years ago they passed a law to help the farmers get it.

118. FREYMAN: Well, just how does the law work, Johnny? How does the farmer get the help?

119. JOHN: Uncle Sam, through the Farm Security Administration, will lend him money for improving his farm with water. In fact he can get a twenty year loan at only three percent...if he can't get credit any place else.

120. FREYMAN: Oh then the help really goes to the farmers who need it most?

121. JOHN: That's right...and the farmer can also get free technical advice about water on his farm from the government engineers ...and soil conservation experts.

122. FREYMAN: Well, after you proved how important water on the farm is to me in the city...I'm certainly glad to know that farmers can get this kind of help.

123. JOHN: They can get it...and have been getting it, Mrs. Freyman. We've been able to help thousands of farmers and ranchers in the Western part of our country make better use of their water resources...so they can farm more efficiently.

124. FREYMAN: And how about the veterans who want to farm? They'd be interested in this water problem too.

125. JOHN: Yes...some of that rich, but dry land in the West is being made ready for the veterans who are turning to the peace and farms. And that's another very important chapter in ...the story of water!

126. MUSIC: THEME

127. FREYMAN: Next week on CONSUMER TIME we're going to talk about removing stains from fabrics, Johnny.

128. JOHN: You mean...gravy stains?

129. FREYMAN: Any kind of stain you can think of.

130. JOHN: Mrs. Freyman...remember, we only have a fifteen minute program.

131. FREYMAN: Well...we'll cover the most common stains. And it's a very important subject, Johnny. With the scarcity and high cost of new clothes, I'm sure everyone will want to know how to keep the clothes they have clean and wearable.

132. JOHN: And didn't you say something about a free booklet on removing stains from fabrics?

133. FREYMAN: I didn't...but I will. Yes, we'll have news of a free booklet that everyone can have to keep ready for just such emergencies as nailpolish spilled on the best tablecloth.

134. JOHN: So be with us next Saturday for another edition of

135. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

136. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

138. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER

139. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Miller and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D. C.

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